



## CINERGY CENTER BECOMING "BEST OF CLASS" FACILITY

NEARLY HALF-WAY THROUGH RENOVATION AND EXPANSION, FACILITY TAKES ON  
NEW CHARACTER AND NEW SPACES

March 10, 2005 ---Public officials and project stakeholders who funded the Cincinnati area's new Cinergy Center convention center today toured the facility to see the progress of its transformation. The \$160 million expansion, renovation and reconfiguration of the Cinergy Center will re-establish it as "best in class" among the competition, allowing it to accommodate 75 percent of the existing convention, conference and meeting market.

The Center's expansion and renovation is now approximately 45 percent complete, within budget, and on schedule for its mid-2006 completion. The project, managed by the City of Cincinnati, also continues to exceed the 30 percent Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation goal for construction trade contracts. The Cinergy Center continues to be open for business during the construction with 87 events added to the Center's existing calendar since construction began in May 2004.

Since November, renovation work has concentrated primarily on updating the 13 north meeting rooms of the facility on the second floor. The north meeting rooms incorporate new operable walls and state-of-the art lighting, audio/visual, and telecommunication systems so the rooms can be customized for each user. The north meeting rooms are the largest block of rooms in the Center and, when combined at 15,800 square-feet, are larger than other ballrooms in the area.

Current renovation work is focused on construction of the Fifth Street concourse on the second and third floors, which provides the main public path through the expanded Center. This concourse is being framed in steel, and will be finished on its interior by a multi-colored wall graphic featuring images of the Ohio River. The concourse will be enclosed by a huge glass curtain wall along Fifth Street that will provide impressive views of Cincinnati's downtown skyline from this unique perspective.

The concourse's multi-story spaces will lead attendees up through the building, culminating in the spectacular lobby and generous pre-function space of the nearly 40,000 square-foot Grand Ballroom. This will be the largest ballroom in the mid-west outside of Chicago's McCormick Place.

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The expansion is proceeding concurrently with the renovation, with the structural steel frame and concrete floors substantially completed and exterior wall treatments being installed. The western façade will welcome people to the City with an icon of glistening metal panels set at angles inside a three-dimensional grid system to form the word "CINCINNATI."

Construction of the icon is well underway towards its expected completion by June 2005. The expansion is on track for completion of the first floor exhibit hall level of nearly 200,000 square feet of exhibit space by January 2006. The second floor meeting room level and third floor Grand Ballroom, serviced by a new and greatly expanded kitchen, will be completed by May 2006, one month ahead of schedule. The reconfiguration of the existing ballroom will complete the project in June 2006.

Events held at the redesigned convention center when it opens in mid-2006 are expected to generate an estimated incremental increase of \$122 million annually in direct and indirect spending for the Cincinnati area economy.

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